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Why not? Because a coalition of Democrat and Republican spenders and earmarkers don't want you to interfere with their pork and pet spending projects. Democrats have always been, and continue to be, the party of tax and spend. But in recent years, a powerful contingent of borrow-and-spend Republicans has joined forces with them to waste ever more of your money on an increasingly widening array of earmarks, new programs and new entitlements.

These spenders have put us into what is unquestionably the deepest fiscal crisis in our nation's history. Here are a few facts about where we are:

- The deficit for this year is now projected to be \$475 billion, easily eclipsing the previous record, set in 2004. That's almost half a trillion dollars. And that number does not include \$185 billion raided from Social Security payments. The real deficit, therefore, is more than \$600 billion.
- Despite this reality, the appropriations committee just released its proposal to increase spending next year by another 7.7 percent. Revenue is currently flat because of the weak economy.
- That increase will push the deficit for 2009 to maybe \$700 billion. Even a President Obama might find it hard to raise taxes enough to collect that much more money.

- The current budget had thousands of unnecessary and often corrupt earmarks, totaling \$18.3 billion. The next budget appears it will have even more.
- Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid all are actually bankrupt and have autopilot annual increases that at current rates will consume 100 percent of your taxes by 2040, leaving no room for a military, parks, courts or anything else without more taxes.
- All of this is an insidious wealth transfer from our kids to us. It increases our debt, further hurts the value of the weak dollar (which accounts for much of the increase in the price of gas) and will put upward pressure on interest rates.
- Every week (without exception recently), Congress votes to spend even more money, creating new programs, new agencies and new entitlements that are not even included in all the numbers listed above. After spending \$261 billion on "supplemental emergency spending" in June, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., now has a proposal to spend billions more on a "second supplemental."

All of this happens because Republican spenders won't criticize Democrat spending if Democrats won't criticize Republicans' spending. If I want to spend a dollar, and you want to spend a dollar, we compromise by spending both. Politicians win. Special interests win. Taxpayers lose.

So what do we do about it?

- Get the word out that we have a big, big problem so the public is engaged.

- Eliminate earmarks as we know them. Spenders win votes by threatening to take out your \$200,000 earmark if you don't vote for this \$400 billion bill. Earmarks are the gateway drug to overspending.
- Don't spend on something new without cutting some existing spending.
- Don't raise taxes because that never works to stop deficits. It just increases the spending level from which the deficit begins.
- Enact a constitutional spending-limit amendment, like the one I have introduced (H.J. Res. 81).
- Enact (or at least begin to talk about) a complete overhaul of the entitlement programs and the tax system like the Wisconsin Republican Rep. Paul Ryan's American Roadmap. ( [www.americanroadmap.org](http://www.americanroadmap.org) ) Without overhaul, either entitlements or our competitiveness will die.

We can solve this, but it takes bold action right now. The longer we wait, the bolder that action will have to be.